



# MANCHESTER HEALTH DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT SUMMARY, FEBRUARY 2006

## Oral Health Program

### PROGRAM LISTING:

**Arbovirus  
Surveillance &  
Control**

**Chronic Disease  
Prevention**

**Communicable  
Disease Control**

**Community  
Epidemiology**

**Environmental  
Planning and  
Pollution Control**

**Food Protection**

**HIV Prevention**

**Immunizations**

**Institutional  
Inspections**

**Lead Poisoning  
Prevention**

**Oral Health**

**Public Health  
Investigations**

**Public Health  
Preparedness**

**Refugee Health**

**School Health**

**Sexually  
Transmitted  
Disease Control**

**Tuberculosis  
Control**

**Water Quality**

**Weed & Seed**

**Youth Health  
Promotion**

**Summary of Program:** Oral health continues to be a serious problem in Manchester, impacting physical, social, and psychological health. Dental caries are the number one chronic disease in children in the United States. Poor oral health affects speech, nutrition, self-esteem and the ability to learn. An estimated 51 million school hours per year are lost in our nation because of dental-related illness.

Begun in 1970, the Manchester Health Department Oral Health Program employs two full-time Dental Hygienists and one part-time Dental Assistant. The program includes school and community-based preventive dental services and the promotion of good oral health through education, and partnerships with the local dental community. School-based and community services include the provision of sealants, prophylaxes, fluoride treatments and referrals for care. Community sites visited by the dental van include Child Health Services, Salvation Army, Head Start and Easter Seals. Access to treatment is accomplished by referrals to the *Take 5 Program* and the *Dentists with a Heart Program*. Community partners are also working collaboratively to expand general dentistry facilities at Catholic Medical Center and Elliot Hospital. The program supports community initiatives to promote oral health as essential to overall health and well being through the statewide *Watch Your Mouth* campaign.

**Summary of Activities:** During Fiscal Year 2005, the Oral Health Program provided the following:

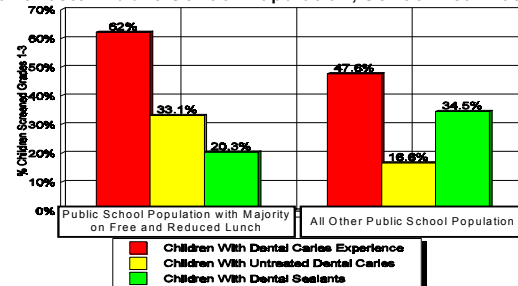
- 3,159 oral screenings
- 634 prophylaxes
- 498 fluoride treatments
- 959 referrals
- 258 sealants
- A total of 166 children were provided with access to care through linkages with the *Take 5 Program* and the *Dentists with a Heart Program*. A total of \$127,062 in free care was provided through collaboration with *Dentists with a Heart*. Since the inception of the *Dentists with a Heart Program* in 2000 a total of 915 patients have received treatment, with \$399,640 being provided in free care. The community has realized approximately \$1,598,560 in savings from these two programs.



**Program Notes and Trends:** Like oral health needs in America, the oral health needs in Manchester are greatest among low-income and racial and ethnic minority populations. Based on the number of dentists available for low-income populations, Manchester has been federally designated as a dental health professional shortage area. With one in four Manchester residents living below 200% of poverty, many in greatest need lack basic access to dental services.

In 2004, the Division initiated a school-based Sealants Program and has since expanded the program within Title One Schools where the need is most critical. With strong evidence that school-based sealants programs reduce decay and are cost-effective, the Division will continue this primary prevention strategy to increase the percentage of second and third grade students with at least one sealant on one permanent molar to 50% by 2010. Coupled with community water fluoridation and increased access to oral health care, the current strategies will assist in achieving a reduction in dental caries experience among children in the City of Manchester.

**Percent of Children in Grades 1-3 with Dental Caries Experience, Untreated Decay, and Dental Sealants**  
Manchester Public School Population, School Year 2002-2003<sup>1</sup>



HEALTHY MANCHESTER 2010 OBJECTIVE: Reduce the proportion of second and third grade students who have dental caries experience in their primary or permanent teeth from 54% in 2001 to 44% by 2010.<sup>2</sup>

## Administrative Notes

### **Flu Pandemic Planning**

The Department recently updated its flu pandemic plan that was first created in 1998. The purpose of the plan is to prepare the community for a rapid response in the event of an outbreak of avian flu or a similar disease. Included in the process of preparing the community response plan has been an assessment of the surge capacity of local hospitals, major health care providers, and home care agencies to handle the expected “overload” of seriously ill patients who will need care.

### **National Incident Management System (NIMS) Compliance**

NIMS was developed by the US Department of Homeland Security in 2004 so responders from different jurisdictions and disciplines could work together to better respond to natural disasters and emergencies, including acts of terrorism. NIMS benefits include a unified approach to incident management; standard command and management structures; and emphasis on preparedness, mutual aid and resource management. Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 “Management of Domestic Incidents” requires that all local jurisdictions become NIMS compliant. In January, the Manchester Health Department began providing NIMS certification training to staff. The Department’s goal is to have all staff NIMS certified by September 2006.

## Community Activities

### **Watch Your Mouth Campaign to improve Oral Health**

During the month of February the "Our Public Health Show" will be airing on Manchester Community Television, Channel 22, with a feature on the *Watch Your Mouth* campaign. The *Watch Your Mouth* campaign is a statewide effort that involves dentists, doctors, city leaders, teachers, and parents. The purpose of the campaign is to inform all NH residents that oral health is critical to the overall health and well-being of our children. The campaign is working to make children's health a priority in our state and in our Manchester community through the following strategies: maintaining support for Healthy Kids Gold; increasing access to cost-effective methods to prevent tooth decay, like community water fluoridation and sealants on the molars of our school-aged children; and removing unhealthy drinks and snacks in our schools and childcare settings. Preventing oral disease is common sense. It saves money and creates a healthy future for our state, and for our community.

## Disease Notes

### **Communicable Disease**

During the month of January, the Public Health Nurses investigated a total of 22 reports of infectious diseases (excluding the TB and HIV/STD work). This number also does not include the extensive investigation done into a report of suspect botulism. After further medical evaluation, it was determined not to be botulism. However, our public health investigation team started immediately upon the report of a suspicion of this very serious condition caused by bacteria producing toxin. Botulism can be a preventable and lethal foodborne illness and, in those instances, it represents a public health emergency since stopping further exposure to the contaminated food is critical to protecting the public. Fortunately, in this case, it was not botulism, but such an investigation could not have waited for this medical determination to be made. Another even more extensive investigation occurred into a norovirus outbreak at a long-term care facility in town. Noroviruses are highly contagious and lead to vomiting, diarrhea, muscle aches, fever, and sometimes dehydration. These viruses represent a common cause of outbreaks of gastrointestinal illness in institutional settings and are spread mostly by direct person-to-person spread through contaminated hands or through consumption of contaminated food and water. The Health Department provided technical assistance to the specific long-term care facility in identifying the cause of the outbreak that affected 41 persons. Such technical assistance included epidemiological analysis as well as presentations to the staff aimed at identifying ways to improve infection control systems and measures for the future.

## MORE INFORMATION

Visit our website at <http://www.manchesternh.gov/CityGov/HLT/Home.html>, or call 624-6466